

## Interview H0023: with Shatra Rimshi Ganden Paljor [tib. bshad sgra rim bzhi dga' ldan dpal 'byor], (India, August 21, 1981) : Part No. 5 of 6

*Shatra was a well known aristocratic official from one of the largest and wealthiest families in Tibet. He talks about the aftermath of the loss of Chamdo in Lhasa and the Dalai Lama's trip to Beijing in 1954.*

Q

What were you doing in 1951?

A

I was in the third [denshu](#) committee to welcome the Dalai Lama back to Lhasa [in 1951]. The head [tib. spyi khyab] of the third [denshu](#) was [Jigyab khembo](#) Ngawang Namgyel [tib. ngag dbang rnam rgyal]. We met the Dalai Lama at Sey Chönkhor Yangtse [tib. zas chos 'khor yang rtse] [monastery]. With me was the monk official Changtse Thubten Senge [tib. byang rtse thub bstan seng ge]. We were his staff. When the Dalai Lama came there we had an audience and gave [khata](#) scarves, etc. This was an extra job [tib. 'phar ma]. My real job was as the Payroll Officer in Dome (Kham) [tib. mdo smad phogs dpon]. I was one of the new staff (tib. [leja](#) [las bya]) of [Kalön] Ngabö [in Chamdo]. [Kalön] Lhalu had moved on to Lhodzong [tib. lho rdzong] to block the communists [in 1950]. I was a new official under Ngabö, but I came a bit late, so by the time I went [to Chamdo] Lhalu was at Kongpo Giamda and Chamdo had been lost, so I was told to stay with Lhalu. In Giamda there was Lhalu and 70 or so monk volunteers (tib. abtru [a phrug]) from the [Big Three Monastic Seats](#) and a few Kudrak with bren guns. The soldiers there had no money for salary.

Everyone was afraid and worried that the communists were coming. Some of the rich Kongpo families had buried their gold underground. Because of this, we weren't able to borrow money to pay the soldiers from them, so I went back to Lhasa to ask what to do and get money for the soldiers' salary.

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At this time, there was an office in the [Shöl](#) Parkhang [tib. zhol par khang] called the dugö [leygung](#) [tib. 'du bkod las khungs] led by Surkhang [Shape](#) which was preparing barley and money for soldiers' salaries. So I asked them for the money and sent my servant to take the salary to Giamda. At that time, I didn't want to go back [to Giamda] and just stayed there [in Lhasa].

I went to the 2 Sitsab, [Lukhangwa](#) and Lobsang Tashi, to ask them in their house to give me leave from having to return. I told them there was nothing to do there [Giamda], and it was just waiting around. In Lhasa there were not that many people since many had gone to India, so please let me remain here. So they said I could stay in Lhasa. So since I was in Lhasa, I became part of the [denshu](#).

Then at Tsakhur Linga [tib. tsha khur gling ga], which was west of Lhasa in Tölung [tib. stod lung] where the Leather Factory is now located [this was a [Nechung](#) tratsang's park], there was a sitting room [tib. gzim chung] for the Dalai Lama because of the close relationship of [Nechung](#) and the Dalai Lama. So the Dalai Lama stayed there on his way back [there were still two more stops before Lhasa]. So the 2 Sitsab and all the Kudrak went there to welcome the Dalai Lama. This was a very elaborate welcome.

Then about half an hour's distance from Tshakhur Linga at Gyaritsel [tib. rgya ri tshal], the custom was for the Namgyel Tratsang to put up tents and have a big welcome celebration. But the Dalai Lama wasn't staying overnight there and he went to Gyetse Luding where there was another big welcome with the 2 Sitsab and all the officials. The Chinese government's representative, Zhang Jingwu, and [his aide] Alo Buzhang were planning to come to welcome the Dalai Lama, but there was an argument over the seating arrangement. The 2 Sitsab said that Zhang Jingwu had to sit facing the 2 Sitsab while Dalai Lama faced straight ahead. The Chinese, however, said no. Zhang had to sit facing the same direction as the Dalai Lama, but he didn't have to sit on a throne. If he sat on a western type chair it was okay. The Sitsab, however, said no. So in the end Zhang didn't come and his number two, Alo Buzhang, came and sat facing the 2 Sitsab. After this ceremony, the Dalai Lama went to [Norbulinga](#) where there was another celebration.

Q

At that time, Chamdo had been lost and the foreign countries implied that they were not going to help much. What did most of the government officials think about the 17-Point Agreement at this time?

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A

From the beginning, everyone was really scared [tib. ngangskrag]. We wondered what the 17-Point Agreement meant. When I was at Giamda, we kept horses saddled by the house so that we could run away at once if the Chinese came. We all had the same thought - if the communists come we would run. The Badang Drongda [tib. pa dang grong drag] Regiment was at Lharigo [tib. lha ri 'go] and the [Ngadang](#) Gyantse Regiment was at Giamda. There also were about 70 volunteers fighters from the [Big Three Monastic Seats](#). The Sitsab said stay there so we did, but neither I nor Lhalu wanted to stay there at all. My whole family was already in India, my wife, kids, etc. There were no family members left in Lhasa. All were in India. I received many telegrams from my family from [Yadong](#) telling me to come to India.

At this time [Sambo](#) Tendzin Thöndrub [tib. bsam pho bstan 'dzin don grub] and Thubten Lengmön [tib. thub bstan legs smon] had gone [via Chamdo] to China. We didn't believe they could make a treaty when they went to Chamdo.

Then the 2 Sitsab convened a Full Assembly [tib. [tsongdu](#) gyendzom] and I went. The Sitsab liked the old ways and the old system. They said that this 17-Point Agreement that has been signed doesn't have the same points as the instructions given by the government. They do not agree [with the instructions] because they were in the other people's land [tib. rang sa mi sa thug pa yin tsang], so Ngabö became powerless. This Agreement isn't what we wanted, so we must all now take control and in unity sign an agreement to make a deal again through bargaining [tib. 'grig 'dzoms byed]. This meeting was held at the [Tse](#) Potala. The Dalai Lama was still in [Yadong](#) and Ngabö was on his way back and Lhalu was in Giamda. There was no discussion at the meeting, the Sitsab simply informed us.

Q

Did all the government officials attend the meeting?

A

Yes. So we sent a petition to the Dalai Lama saying we want to discuss this treaty. Lhalu came two or three days after this meeting. At that time, the Agreement had been signed and Zhang Jingwu was on his way to Lhasa.

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Q

Do you remember what month it was?

A

I think it was the start of 3rd Tibetan month in 1951.

Q

This was after the Agreement was signed, right?

A

Yes. And the representatives were coming back by the sea route [via India].

Q

At that time, had the Agreement reached Lhasa?

A

No. Probably they reported it to [Tromo](#).

Q

Later when Ngabö came, wasn't there another meeting?

A

After the Dalai Lama came there was no government meeting opposing the 17-Point Agreement, but there was opposition from the fake People's Association (tib. [mimang](#) tshondu dzüma [mi dmangs tshogs 'du rdzus ma]).

Q

Where did the People's Association hold its meeting?

A

They didn't hold a meeting. They selected some representatives such as Bisur [tib. spel zur], Alo Chöndze, and a monk from Shelkar Chöde [tib. shel dkar chos sde]] saying they were the representatives of the people. They met secretly, not openly. They never had a

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real meeting because they didn't have an organization. They presented a petition to the Kashag opposing the 17-Point Agreement. At this time, the two Sitsab are said to have been leading them, although this was never open support/help. When the petition reached the Kashag, the Sitsab told the Kashag that this was an issue of the people so you should listen to them. There were no government officials involved in this.

Q

What was in the petition?

A

I don't know. I think it said we oppose the liberation [tib. bcings 'grol] and we don't want reforms. Tibet is independent and it was a loss to sign the Agreement. I think this is what it said. However, I don't know in detail.

Q

Has this appeared in any books or articles?

A

I'm not sure, probably since a lot has appeared in newspapers and magazines.

Q

I heard that in 1951-52 the People's Association did all sorts of things criticizing the Chinese and they [sang](#) some strange songs ridiculing the Chinese and telling people not to sell them grain. Do you remember these?

A

It does appear as if the government blocked the sale of grain to the Chinese army. In the Agreement it said the local government had to sell the grain and that the Central Committee will pay for that, but they didn't sell the grain well. This also made it inconvenient for private individuals to sell grain to the Chinese. When the Chinese troops came they brought only a backpack and a mug - no grain - so they had a hard time at first. It is said that the Sitsab said, "Than losing a war, starving is worse" [tib. dmag pham ba las grod khog ltog pa sdug gi red]. No one openly said you can't sell to the Chinese, but private people saw the government's appearance of not wanting to sell and followed along.

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The Chinese had a clever strategy. They made private relations with people and asked them to sell grain directly. So people sold this way. For example, they came to our family and asked us to sell them grain and we sold them some.

Q

Eventually the 2 Sitsab had their fight with the Chinese officers and had to resign. How did this happen?

A

At that time I wasn't there, so I don't know, but Lhalu and Ngabö were there. I do know a little though, since Lobsang Tashi and I were in prison in the same house so I heard some from conversations.

Q

What was the main issue?

A

They had a big contradiction at that time. [Lukhangwa](#) had great loyalty for the Tibetan government and liked the old customs. Lobsang Tashi was a bit different, since he had lived in China for 3 years in the [Khendrönlosum](#) [office] [tib. mkhan mgon lo gsum] so had more understanding of world affairs. But they were very friendly and trusted each other very much and whatever [Lukhangwa](#) said, Lobsang Tashi said, "Yes, that's right." At that time, the Sitsab were between the Dalai Lama and the Kashag so that whatever the Kashag sent to the Dalai Lama went through the Sitsab and they didn't pass everything the Kashag sent up [to the Dalai Lama]. Likewise, what came down from the Dalai Lama went through the Sitsab and they didn't pass along all that the Dalai Lama said, which made the Chinese officials hard to handle [tib. gnang stabs ma bde ba]. This is what people said.

Lobsang Tashi told me that at that time Zhang Jingwu used to suddenly appear to see the Dalai Lama in his residence. At this time, the 2 Sitsab would come into the Dalai Lama's room and stay there standing up. So Zhang Jingwu said to the Sitsab that it is not good for them to stay like this. The Sitsab responded saying, "The Dalai Lama is the supreme ruler and owner [tib. don gyi bdag po] of Tibet, but he is young has not had

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experience in politics. He is still accumulating experience so it is not okay if we didn't serve him. This made it very inconvenient for the Chinese officials.

Once in the Dalai Lama's room in the [Jokhang](#) called Labrangteng Simjung Nangsi [tib. bla brang steng gzim chung snang srid], there was a meeting with Zhang Jingwu, Fan Ming, Zhang Guohua, Wang Qimei, the 2 Sitsab, and the Kashag. The point of the meeting was to discuss the gradual absorption of the Tibetan army into the People's Liberation Army and about the Tibetan flag. The Chinese said the Tibetan flag is an English flag, so the army should not be permitted to carry it.

At this time [Lukhangwa](#) came out openly and said, "This flag is the Tibetan national flag. It was not given to us by the English. We didn't just pick it up. It was created during the 13th Dalai Lama's time for our use, so it is a flag with history. So we can not just throw it away." So because of this, later the soldiers carried both the Chinese flag and the Tibetan flag at ceremonies. [Lukhangwa](#) also said that "in the 17-Point Agreement it said that the Tibetan army will be absorbed gradually [tib. rim pas], so we can't do it now. This is not an appropriate time to do this since the blood of the Tibetan people from the Chamdo liberation is not yet dry." The Sitsab and the Chinese had an argument over this and Fan Ming said, "You are someone who is stirring up trouble between the Chinese and Tibet governments and someone who is trying to destroy the 17-Point Agreement. You are not listening to us no matter how much we try to get along [tib. bstun mkhas]. So we are going to ask the Dalai Lama to demote you." Then [Lukhangwa](#) said, "That's fine, ask him. If the Dalai Lama says jump into the river or jump into a fire, I will do it. But I can't yield to others. I am going to petition Mao Zedong regarding you. Your behavior is not appropriate in Tibet and you are always talking biased." Then Zhang Jingwu said, "You two shouldn't quarrel. I am Mao's representative, so I will think about giving a petition to the Dalai Lama and a petition to Mao." So he mediated between the two.

Lukhangwa also said the saying, "Even though one says that one is not white, it is white to the snow" [tib. mi dkar byas kyang gangs la dkar] which means that even though Zhang Jingwu say that he will not be biased, he was biased on Fan Ming's side. Then [Lukhangwa](#) also said, "If one's head is broken with a golden statue, there is no blessing. One would not like it if one is insulted by one's relative" [tib. mgo bser skus bcag na byin rlabs med/dma' nye bas phab na dga' rgyu med]. This might be a quote from the Gesar Story. [He meant that since we are attacked in Chamdo, we wouldn't appreciate the Chinese coming and trying to act friendly]. So Zhang Jingwu didn't have anything to say and the meeting was over.

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Q

At that time, the Kashag was also there, so did the Kashag stand in between the Chinese and the Sitsab?

A

Basically, the Kashag didn't have any choice but to go along with the Sitsab, but probably they didn't dare to come out openly like the 2 Sitsab. So I heard they were staying there in an appropriate manner [tib. spam po]. My paternal uncle was Shasur. He was the assistant [Kalön](#). I heard from others that Shasur once said, "We [Kalön](#) should also talk a little bit, otherwise if we don't talk and always let the Sitsab talk, it is becoming like we are handing over the Sitsab" [not supporting what they say].

Q

Who were the other [Shape](#)?

A

Rampa [tib. ram pa], Surkhang, Ngabö, Shasur, Thubten Rabyang [tib. thub bstan rab dbyangs], and there was also Dombo [tib. gdong por].

Q

I heard that some people in the People's Association surrounded Zhang Jingwu's house. And in one of the books it says that they shot a gun at Ngabö house and about 50 people were arrested. Can you explain about these?

A

At that time, Zhang Jingwu was living not in Yuthok House but in the [old] [Sandutsang](#) House [tib. sa 'du tshang rnying pa]. At the time of the People's Association's disturbance, the 4 [Trunyichemmo](#) and 4 Tsipön were called to Zhang Jingwu's house and they were kept there saying that if they didn't stay there it is not going to be good because people causing a disturbance have surrounded the house. So they stayed there one night to kind of protect them. Nothing happened like stoning them. Zhang Jingwu also said at this time that there are people behind the scene directing the People's Association's disturbance [tib. yol ba'i rgyab kyi jus 'god byed mkhan].



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Q

It seems to me that there were two paths. One was to regard the 17-Point Agreement as okay and act according to the Agreement and other path was to oppose it. Didn't they think that if they opposed it very strongly the Chinese would send more troops? They should have a plan thinking what benefit they could gain if they did this. I am not clear about this.

A

This is kind of secret [tib. lkog gyur] to me also.

Q

Did they think that they would get foreign support?

A

They probably thought they were going to receive foreign help.

Q

At that time, [Jenkhentsisum](#) was there in Kalimpong, right?

A

The foreign countries actually supported them, but they couldn't stop the Chinese. However I think they definitely had a plan to stop the Chinese after their arrival. And there was the Tibet Welfare Association (tib. Dedön Tshogpa [bde don tshogs pa]) and probably they had support on all the aspects from foreign countries. Actually, they should have know that it was impossible to handle the Chinese by making war. The Communist Party regarded the people highly and the reforms were going to be done according to the wishes of the people. They said whenever the people want reforms we will do them and the Central Committee will not force the reforms. There was no set timetable. So when they [People's Association] took the name of the people it seemed that the people didn't want the reforms. So I think they were thinking about delaying or postponing the implementation of the reforms. Probably, the representatives of the People's Association were not selected by the people. They were people who were verbal and then got together and agreed to act.

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Q

Could you officials go to India, etc. in the early 1950s?

A

Yes. We could go whenever we wanted. We Kudrak had to ask the [Tibetan] government for permission to leave, but other people just could go when they wished. There were no passports, etc. needed, and no customs [offices], etc.

Q

In 1952, the 2 Sitsab were set aside and in 1954 the Dalai Lama went to Beijing. Were you part of his entourage?

A

No, I wasn't. But I was in the first [denshu](#) [welcoming delegations when he returned]. We went to [Dartsedo](#) to meet the Dalai Lama. The custom was to send three [denshu](#).

Q

Was this the one with Bisur and Alo Chöndze?

A

Yes. We had a lot of troubles (tib. nyogtra [rnyog khra]).

Q

Please tell me about this.

A

The Dalai Lama went to attend the first National People's Congress [tib. rgyal yongs mi dmangs 'thus mi tshogs chen] in Beijing to approve the new constitution. So the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama were asked to attend. They sent an invitation. There were two opinions among the government officials regarding the Dalai Lama's going to China. One group was opposed and one in favor. Those who were against it said that if the Dalai Lama went the Chinese would keep him there. I thought that it would be good if he went. I had been on the first Gift-Giving Delegation (tib. Tenbū Tshogba [rten 'bul tshogs pa])

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led by Liushar Thubten Tharpa [tib. sne'u shar thub bstan thar pa]. He was the Tuanzhang and Dingja Dorje Gyentsen [tib. lding bya rdo rje rgyal mtshan] was the Vice Tuanzhang. I thought that if the Dalai Lama went he would have a broader vision of the world. It is better to see something than to merely hear about it. From the lay officials [tib. shod skor] there were [Shakabpa](#) and Mentöba [tib. sman stod pa]. From the monk officials there was Khenjung Thubten Samchogla [tib. thub bstan bsam mchog lags]. From the Seynamba [rank] there was [Yabshi](#) Jebula [ch. jie fu] [brother-in law] Phüntso Tashi [tib. phun tshogs bkra shis]), me, [Shölkhang](#) Thargyela [tib. zhol khang dar rgyas lags], and Phünkhang Tsering Thöndrup [tib. phun khang tshe ring don grub]. Then there also were 4 tsendrön: Dongpo Ngawang Rigtrö [tib. gdong por ngag dbang rigs grol], Gyentsen Temphe [tib. rgyal mtshan bstan 'phel] who was from Jigyab Khempo Gyambumgang's [tib. rje 'bum sgang] monk household (tib. [shagtsang](#) [shag tshang])

Q

Is he still there [in Tibet]?

A

He is in the Municipal Political Consultative Conference [tib. grong khyer chab srid gros tshogs]. And from the fifth rank letsemba [tib. las tshan pa] there was Yeshe Lhündrub [tib. ye shes lhun grub] who later went to India and took asylum and there was [the older] Driyü [tib. 'bri yul rgan pa]. There were also some people from Shigatse. And there were also some traders and some representatives of the [Big Three Monastic Seats](#). There were also women such as [Yabshi](#) Tsering Drölma [tib. tshe ring sgrol ma].

There were actually two groups. The higher officials were called the Gift-giving Delegation and the other was the Tour Group (tib. Takor Tshogba [lta skor tshogs pa]). The first went via plane from India to Singapore to Hong Kong and Beijing and the other went over land by horse (and then by car from Derge Jomda Dzong [tib. sde dge 'jo mda' rdzong]).

My wife Künsangla [tib. kun bzang lags] didn't feel safe staying in Lhasa alone with the communists just having arrived so she was very worried and asked me to take her with me and she was also crying. I was in the horse group, but Künsangla had a bad leg so couldn't ride like that.

The staff of the two Thuanzhang had been already confirmed as follows: Jebula and his wife Tsering Drölma, Shölkhang, Horkhang, Tsidrung Champa Nyandrag [tib. byams pa

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snyan grags], and Tsidrung Wöser Bumther [tib. 'od zer 'bum ther]. So I couldn't go among the staff. At that time there was a Chinese office called Procurement Office [tib. mkho sgrub las khungs] headed by a Chinese called Liu Buzhang. I was friendly with him, so I went to discuss this with him and asked him to get us among the staffs who are going by air. He at once called Yuthok [tib. g.yu thog] house for Zhang Guohua. I got a message that it was all right soon after.

So I went and saw the development in China. So when the Dalai Lama going was being discussed, the Kashag called those who had gone on the [earlier] tour: Kündeling [tib. kun bde gling], Dzasag Wöser Gyentsen [tib. 'od zer rgyal mtshan], all the Trungtsi, the representatives of the [Big Three Monastic Seats](#), and some monk and lay officials. They asked us if the Dalai Lama goes will it be good or bad, and is there a risk to the Dalai Lama's life. They all said if he went it would be good. We said we received good treatment and high officials met us at the railway station, so if he goes it would be good. There will be no risk. But still there were some people who did not fully trust us.

The Kashag therefore recommended to the Dalai Lama that he go to Beijing. But at that time there was a group who were against the trip. Finally the order came that they would do a [senriy](#) [divine lottery] in front of the Maha Kala Chapel or Gombokhang [tib. mgon po khang] in [Norbulinga](#). At this time, the Central Committee said it would be great if you came to the meeting as it is very important. All the key Chinese officials will be there and you can meet them. And you can visit your home on the way. If you don't come, the Panchen Lama is definitely coming, so please think about this well [otherwise it may seem Panchen Lama is the representative of Tibet].

I was there in the Gombokhang when the [senriy](#) lottery was done. I was one of the officials standing up. The two tutors (tib. yongdzin [tib. yongs 'dzin]) did the prayers for propitiating the deity by serving tea or [chang](#) [tib. ljags skyems] before the Maha Kala. The [senriy](#) was done by the Dalai Lama. The paper had to be the same size and the writing the same number of words -- it said, "if it is good for the Dalai Lama to go to China, please select this one" [tib. ta la'i bla ma rgya nag la phebs pa dga' na 'di bab rogs gngang] or "if it is not good for him to go, please select this one" [tib. ma phebs pa dga' na 'di bab rogs gngang]. The strip of paper was then rolled up and put into a piece of [bag](#) [tsamba mixed with watr and kneaded] and weighed on a jeweler's type of scale one, ball on each side to make sure they were exactly balanced. Then they were put in a porcelain cup called long handle [tib. yu ring]. Then Dalai Lama held it and did the prayer, and holding it in both hands turned it around and around quickly until one ball fell out. The [Trunyichemmo](#)

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Jawtang picked this up and gave it to Dalai Lama. The Dalai lama then opened the "bag" and read the paper. It said go to China. Then the Dalai Lama took the other ball that hadn't fallen out and opened it to make sure no trick had been played. So it was decided the Dalai Lama should go. I wasn't among that group that went.

The 17-Point Agreement said that Tibet should make reforms when ready and the Tibetan government established the Reform Office, Legjö lekhang [tib. legs bcos las khungs] to examine and oversee this. The main head of this was Ngabö. Under him were the Trungtsigye. Then there were the representatives of the [Big Three Monastic Seats](#). Tsögö [tib. mtsho sgo] was one of the Reform Office members appointed from the ranks of the Seynamba, and when he was sent with the Dalai Lama to China, I was sent in his place to that office.

Q

What year did it begin?

A

I think it was in the Wood-Horse Year (1954) [he may mean that was when he joined it]. I was sent as a member of the first Denshu to welcome back the Dalai Lama from China.

Q

Did the Kashag send the [denshu](#)?

A

It was sent by the government itself and the Kashag made the arrangement for the lay officials. The Kashag took a name list of suitable members from the monk officials and the Kashag made the plan for it. My partner was Katsab Lama Thubten Rabyang. When the Dalai Lama was in [Yadong](#), he and Shasur were left to run the Kashag. He was no longer [Kalön](#), but was an ex-Kalön or Kasur [tib. bka' zur]. He was the representative of the monk officials and I was the representative of the lay officials. In rank he was higher than me, but on this job we were equal.

With us were some of the fake representatives of the People's Association; Bisur, Alo Chöndze, Shelkar Chöde [tib, shel dkar chos sde], Gelong and [Amdo](#) Gyetong. They had sent a petition to the Kashag asked to be part of the first [denshu](#) as the representatives of the People's Association. The Kashag then asked the Tibet Work Committee [tib. bod

las don u yön lhan khang] whether it was all right for them to go. They replied, "It is okay, but the Kashag has to take the responsibility that no misfortune occurs" [tib. kha chag sna ral]. So the Kashag called us and told us that these 4 are going with you and you have to be responsible for them like the proverb, "the body should remain under the head" [tib. mgo 'og lus bcug], and see that no trouble occurs. You must not allow them to do reckless things [tib. [gang](#) byung mang byung]. So the Kashag called these four to the secretariat [tib. 'gag] of the Kashag and passed on instructions via the Kadrung and Kandrön. "You can't do wild things on this Denshu and whatever these two heads say you have to put that into practice. And after you return to Lhasa you must not cause trouble."

When we left in trucks, there were two representatives of the government officials together with us as the staff (tib. [leja](#) [las bya]). One was the [Yigtsang](#) student [tib. yig tshang slob phrug] from my partner's [shagtsang](#) whose name was Thubten Ngawang [tib. thub bstan ngag dbang]. Also the representative of Sera was the abbot Töba Khempo [tib. stod pa mkhan po]. The representative of Ganden was the abbot Shartse Khempo [tib. shar rtse mkhan po] and the representative of Drepung was Tshükhong Lama Jampel Trinley [tib. tshul khang bla ma 'jam dpal 'phrin las]. Nothing happened regarding the representatives of the People's Association along the trip [on the road].

When we reached [Dartsedo](#), there was an earthquake and the road forward was cut. Cars couldn't go because the road was split. So we stayed at [Dartsedo](#) in an inn. At this time, the Dalai Lama had reached Yangen [ch. ya an]. From [Dartsedo](#) we sent a telegram to Dalai Lama saying, "We are the first [denshu](#) and have reached [Dartsedo](#). The Kashag's orders were to meet you at [Dartsedo](#). but shall we wait here or come forward to meet you." The reply by telegram said, "Wait for us there. But check every day and let us know the conditions of the road around [Dartsedo](#)." So we waited there and checked each day on the roads and sent them a telegram.

Then one day suddenly Alo Chöndze and Bisur Dorje Thöndrup [tib. rdo rje don grub] came to us and said, "The Dalai Lama is in Yangen so our staying here is pointless. We have to go on to meet him. We don't know if the road is ahead finished or not [i.e., maybe it is finished]. We came to do the [denshu](#) for Dalai Lama, not sit in [Dartsedo](#)." My partner said, "We have received an order from the Dalai Lama to stay here, so we can not go forward. We also have work to do checking the roads around here every day and sending a telegram." Then the two representatives said, "If you two can't go, we will go." They wouldn't listen to our saying don't go. Finally my partner said, "Let's let them go. If there is trouble we can say that we instructed them not to go, but they refused to listen."

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So they went. They asked the head of the inn to send a car. [He said] "If the group's leaders agree I will send one." So they came to us and said, "They won't give us a car." So then we told the inn's head to give them a car. He did and the 4 representatives of the People's Association went ahead.

When the Dalai Lama came there were tents set up at the [Dartsedo](#) airport and we gave the Dalai Lama the letter from the Kashag. When the Dalai Lama came, Phala Drönyerchemmo said to us in an angry way as we stood with heads bent over, "What is this? In the first [denshu](#), there is a former one and a later one." Actually, we didn't have any choice, but to have two because they didn't listen to us. We had an audience with the Dalai Lama in the tent. The Central Committee had made elaborate preparations with all kinds of fried cookies (tib. khabse [kha zas]). The Dalai Lama said, "You have all had a difficult time coming here."

We left with the Dalai Lama from [Dartsedo](#) to Dawu Nyamsogön [tib. rta'u nyams gso dgon] monastery. There everyone in the monasteries were inviting the Dalai Lama here and there asking for the dharma teachings along the way and the Dalai Lama gave the initiations and there were endless Khambas coming for audiences, so the plan was extended for a few days. So there the Dalai Lama told us we could go ahead and not wait for them, so we left with the Dalai Lama to follow soon.

The 2nd Densu was waiting in Chamdo. It was headed by two fourth rank officials: Surkhang Khenjung and Tsarong Rimshi. The 3rd densu was at Giamda. It was headed by a [Shape](#). We returned straight to Lhasa.

Q

In Alo Chöndze's book he said he made relations with Lithang and Derge and planned and prepared for the revolt and they made a petition and said that if the petition didn't work, then you should launch the revolt. Did you notice any of this?

A

The Dalai Lama didn't go to Lithang, but the monks came to the Dalai Lama on a plain where tents were pitched. The Dalai Lama gave an initiation. There were many [Khamba](#) and Lithang monks and Alo Chöndze was also there. The Dalai Lama couldn't visit all the areas and monasteries so he sent representatives to these, e.g. Trijang [tib. khri byang] Rimpoche and [Tshurpu](#) Karmaba [tib. mtshur phu kar ma pa] and Möndröling [tib. smin grol gling] Jung [tib. gcung] Rimpoche. They gave some dharma teachings and at that



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time, there was such talk and they also gave the picture of Dalai Lama to the people in these areas. But there was no plan to incite revolt that I know of. But China probably suspected that they did discuss the revolt.

Q

Did Alo Chöndze and them discuss any politics with you?

A

No. We and they had really nothing normally to do with each other. They stayed together and we did also. One day in [Dartsedo](#), Alo Chöndze came to us and said that he heard "good news" on the radio: "Premier Zhou almost died in an airplane crash in Kashmir today. In that Indian airplane there was the secretary of Nehru and some other staff and 2-3 people were injured. If Zhou had been in the first plane he would have been hurt." He was telling us this in very delighted manner. Bisur was also a bit crazy. Once when we were eating and the Khambas had piled up a lot of meat on the table, Bisur said seriously that he thinks that may be human flesh. Other than this time we had no discussion with Alo Chöndze.

Q

When the Dalai Lama was in Beijing, Mao told him about the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region [TAR]. What did you officials think about this?

A

Mao said we don't have to do the Military Administrative Committee [tib. dmag srid u yön lhan khang] and we can go right to the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region. We can do a jump right to this without the intermediate step.

When the Dalai Lama returned to Lhasa there a big meeting called at the [Tsidrung Linga](#) [tib. rtse drung gling ga] park. The moderator of the meeting was Ngabö. All the Kudrak were there, even the military Rupön and Gyagpön. It told all about the trip to China and the Dalai Lama's new title of Vice Chairman of the National People's Congress [tib. u yön krang gshon pa] and the Panchen Lama's title of the Vice Chairman [ch. fu zhuxi] of the National Political Consultative Conference [tib. rgyal yongs chab gros]. And they announced that we didn't have to do the Military Administrative Committee and Tibetan troops would be gradually absorbed into the People's Liberation Army and that they were



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giving livelihood for the future [tib. 'tsho ba'i mdun lam] old retired soldiers and that the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region would be started. And that we have to look after the old officials without work. All sorts of things like that, they said.

Q

Was there any discussion like some said that it is not good?

A

No. It was solely to tell us what was happening, not ask our opinions. Later there was a lot of opposition.

Later there was a Large Abbreviated Assembly [tib. [tsondu](#) hragdu gyepa] meeting in Norbuling's Shabten Lhagang [tib. zhabs brtan lha khang]. I was there. There was discussion about the replacement of the Military Administrative Committee with Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region.

At this time, the representative of Ganden nicknamed "pika" (tib. abra [a bra]) said, "I don't know what a "Military Administrative Committee is. [Trying to understand what you are talking about] is like fumbling around in the dark." He said all kinds of disparaging things like this. There was a very capable and verbal Dzasa called Gyetagba [tib. rgyas rtags pa] (who had a Chinese wife) and knew a little Chinese. He said, "There is a big difference between the [TAR](#) and the Military Administrative Committee. The former is called Junzheng Weiyuan Hui in Chinese. And this is a great jump ahead by skipping one step in Tibet's development." Then the representative of Ganden said, "Now mister Dzasa has said that in Tibetan it is called Magsi Uyön Lhenkhang [tib. dmag srid u yön lhan khang] [Military Administrative Committee] and in Chinese it is called Junzheng Weiyuan Hui, but we don't know Chinese so all this is like arriving in the dark. It is like groping in the dark. It's like being in the dark all this" [This is sarcastic in Tibetan]. At this meeting almost everyone was against this idea and expressed this in various ways.

Q

I heard that some people liked the idea since it would reunite Chamdo and Shigatse. At that time, on average, how many people liked it and how many people disliked it?

A

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Lukhangwa and the Chinese representative talked and [Lukhangwa](#) said to him, "You have stolen Chamdo from us." Then there was an argument. The Chinese representative said, "If you start an Autonomous Region, we will give you back Chamdo." So in the Preparatory Committee for the Tibet Autonomous Region [PCTAR] there were the people from the Tibetan Government, [Tashilhunpo](#), and Kham [tib. gzhung bla khams gsum], although the Tibetan Government had the most representatives and officials.

Q

As for the foreigners like me, it seems like the Tibetan Government would no longer be there. At this time, did the Kashag support the setting up of the [PCTAR](#)?

A

They approved the decision to go ahead with this. Without their approval, it couldn't be installed.

Q

So the Kashag thought that it is good, right?

A

There were various opinions in the Kashag about this, some positive, some negative.

Q

Most people were suspicious, right?

A

The main one opposing it was the [Big Three Monastic Seats](#). They said the monastic estates will be lost and the monastery's [donggo](#) [religious rituals] will deteriorate, etc. And they didn't have any experience and they remained in a chaotic manner.